



Your Energy Connection

Rocky Mount Public Utilities



What is a Carbon Footprint?

From reusable grocery bags to hybrid cars, the message about making less of an impact on the environment in our daily lives is here to stay.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that measures be taken to protect and conserve our limited resources. In recent years, *carbon footprint* has become a part of everyday vernacular. A *carbon footprint* can be defined as the impact of human activities on the environment through the burning of fossil fuels, or the amount of greenhouse gases individually produced. A carbon footprint is measured in tons of carbon dioxide.



Fossil fuels are nonrenewable resources that were produced millions of years ago by decomposing plants and animals. Dead plant and animal matter, along with heat, bacteria, and enormous amounts of pressure combined to create fossil fuels. Fossil fuels are used in everything from the production of electricity, driving a car, manufacturing of plastics, heating, and transportation. When fossil fuels are burned, they emit what is known as *greenhouse gases* (GHG). These gases penetrate and can damage the layers of the Earth's atmosphere, potentially affecting climate and weather patterns. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, carbon dioxide is one of the most environmentally harmful greenhouse gases.

An individual's total carbon footprint is the sum of two parts: the primary footprint and the secondary footprint. The primary footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide directly emitted from the burning of fossil fuels. For example,

coal fired electric generating facilities directly emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The secondary footprint is the amount of indirect carbon dioxide emissions from the whole lifecycle of products consumers use. These emissions are caused by the production and breakdown of products. An example of this would be heating and air conditioning equipment (HVAC). HVAC equipment does not directly emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. However, the process of generating energy needed to operate the equipment to heat and cool a home does create carbon dioxide.

Energy production and consumption are sensitive to changes in the climate caused by excess carbon emissions. For example, if temperatures rise due to climate change, the demand for heating will decrease, but the demand for cooling will increase, ultimately increasing the amount of fossil fuels needed to meet the demand, and generating more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

There are ways to reduce an individual's carbon footprint. Reducing energy consumption will instantly lower an individual's carbon footprint.

- As light bulbs burn out, replace them with energy efficient CFL light bulbs.
- Set the thermostat at 78 degrees in the summer months and at 68 degrees in the winter months.
- Instead of using a clothes dryer, hang clothes on a clothes line outside.
- Set the temperature on the water heater at 120 degrees.
- If an appliance is not in use, TURN IT OFF!

BEAT THE PEAK

"Peak" or "Peak Demand" is the greatest amount of electricity used at one time by an electric system. This occurs when a large number of customers are using appliances and HVAC at the same time.

By controlling the electric load or load management, we can keep electric costs in control. Rocky Mount averages less than 10 days per month load managing.

There are several options available:

Electric Water Heater Control

Water heaters are cycled off during load management periods.

Controlling water heaters will not affect the amount of hot water available.

Customers receive **\$2.00 credit** each month.

Electric Heat Strip Control

Heat strips, known as auxiliary heat, are controlled during the winter load management periods, while heat pump compressors continue to operate and provide heat.

Customers receive **\$15.00 credit** each month if the temperature falls to 25 degrees or below on a non-holiday weekday.

Central Air Conditioning Total Control

Customers receive **\$20.00 credit** each month for all three months during the summer season. The air conditioner's compressor is automatically turned off for the load management period. During summer month's the peak usually occurs between 2 p.m. through 6 p.m. Fans will continue to circulate the cool air in your house, but the compressor will not generate any new cool air.

There are **no installation or maintenance charges** associated with this program.

Call 972-1284 for more information.



HURRICANE SEASON

June 1st through November 30th

Being prepared for emergencies is critical to being safe at home, at school or at work. Below are three steps to being prepared:

1. Prepare a Kit

- 3 days of water and non perishable food for each person in your family
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Battery powered radio
- First aid kit
- Medications
- Cell phone with charger
- Emergency contact information
- Extra cash

2. Make a Plan

- Choose an out-of-area contact person
- Assign responsibilities to each family member
- Plan ahead for pets
- Choose a location to meet in the event of an evacuation

3. Be Informed

- Get information on weather developments from local news and radio stations
- Know your region
- Have an action plan

WORD SEARCH

Electricity

R	W	Z	E	S	D	B	C	M	G
I	X	N	N	Y	A	O	I	N	W
Y	J	O	I	C	R	F	D	H	M
V	B	S	L	D	Z	G	E	E	F
P	H	I	R	F	R	J	R	T	L
O	J	M	E	G	K	T	U	Y	Y
W	R	C	W	O	O	E	T	J	B
E	K	G	O	N	X	E	F	Z	W
R	N	S	P	G	U	L	P	G	Z
L	I	G	H	T	B	U	L	B	R

CORD
POWERLINE
POWER

SAFETY
PLUG
LIGHTBULB